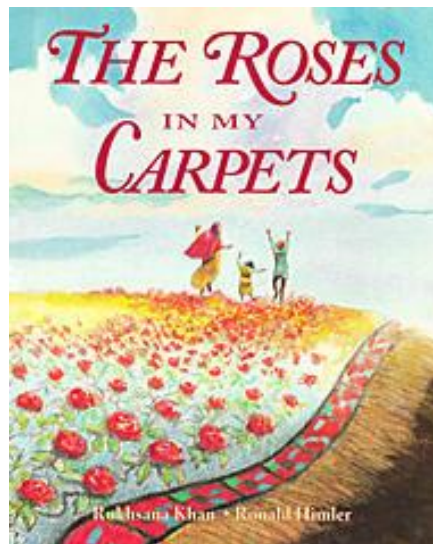


# The Roses in My Carpets

## Study Guide for Grades 3-6, 7-8, and 9-12

With Student Activity Sheets



Written and Performed by:

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## About Rukhsana Khan

Rukhsana has been writing seriously since 1989 with, at this point ten books published, several of which have been nominated and/or won various awards. Along the way she also became a storyteller and has performed at numerous festivals. For more information on Rukhsana and her books please see her website:

[www.rukhsanakhan.com](http://www.rukhsanakhan.com)



Rukhsana was born in Lahore, Pakistan and immigrated to Canada, with her family, at the age of three. She began by writing for community magazines and went on to write songs and stories for the Adam's World children's videos. Rukhsana is a member of SCBWI, The Writers Union of Canada, CANSCAIP, and Storytelling Toronto. She lives in Toronto with her husband and family. Rukhsana has four children, three girls and a boy.

### Books by Rukhsana:

*Wanting Mor*

*A New Life*

*Many Windows*

*Silly Chicken*

*Ruler of the Courtyard*

*The Roses in My Carpets*

*Muslim Child*

*King of the Skies*

*Bedtime Ba-a-a-lk*

*Dahling if You Luv Me Would You Please Please Smile*












### Acknowledgement:




This study guide was created in consultation with Pat McCarthy, Education Resource Consultant and input from Tracie Vaughn Zimmer.

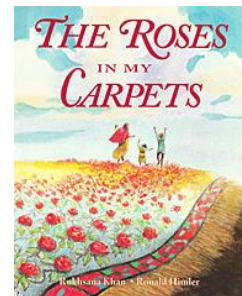
# The Roses in My Carpets Presentation

This presentation is a behind the scenes look at the inspiration and creative process of this award-winning story.

<u>Legend</u>	
 writing applications	 character applications
 visual art applications	 Social Studies
 drama applications	 Science
 History applications	 Music
 Math applications	

## Themes in the Performance

- Racism and wanting to fit in
- Foster children and refugees
- Conditions of war
- Poverty and living conditions in the third world
- Putting oneself in the point of view of someone else 
- A visual tour of an Afghan refugee camp
- The ingenuity of mud houses 
- The importance of revision in the creative process
- The importance of perseverance 
- Helping orphans and developing libraries in Afghanistan



# Pre-Performance Preparation

## Junior, Intermediate and Secondary Grades

Exploring the Setting:



The story is set in Peshawar, Pakistan. Peshawar lies on one of the routes of the ancient Silk Road. The Khyber Pass is the most important route between Pakistan and Afghanistan. To find out more about this strategic area see the webpages below:



<http://www.afghanistans.com/>

<http://www.afghan-network.net/Culture/khyber.html>

Afghanistan has long been the victim of invasion from ancient times to modern. In recent history the British, the Russians and the Americans have invaded. The invaders have always been met with fierce resistance.



The correct term for a person from Afghanistan is 'Afghan' not Afghani. 'Afghani' is the name of the currency.



There are two predominant languages in Afghanistan: Dari (Farsi) and Pushto.

Many Afghans describe the shape of their country as a clenched fist with a thumb pointing towards the northeast. What does this comparison say about the personality of Afghan people?



Find Afghanistan and Pakistan on a world map.



Find the city of Peshawar. Note how close it is to the border.

What land features are prevalent in the area? This area is part of the Himalayas. What mountain(s) in the area have the students heard of? Everest and K2—the tallest and second tallest mountains in the world respectively

What is the climate of the area? How cold does it get in winter? (Answer: Close to freezing) How hot in summer? (Answer: Around 80 degrees F)



How would that affect living conditions for the characters in the story? Remember they have no central heating.

The refugees were glad that there were three growing seasons in Peshawar whereas there was only one in Afghanistan.

## Pre-performance Discussion Topics



### Junior Grades

- a) Read the book to the students, note colour palette activity at end of this section.
- b) Discuss wars and how many children are involved in war all over the world. What are refugees? The term ‘refugee’ comes from the word ‘refuge’ which means ‘a safe place’, so refugees are those who are looking for a safe place. Ask if they know anyone who is a refugee.
- c) Ask if they know what a foster child is, and how you can have a foster child from another country.
- d) Conflict resolution--Discuss ways in which people can solve problems without having a war.
- e) Tell the children that they are going to meet a story-teller, author who has written a story about a refugee camp in Afghanistan, after she visited her foster child.







### Intermediate and Secondary Grades

- a) Read the book to the students, note colour palette activity at end of this section.
- b) Look at the copyright page in the book. When would this story be set? Is this story still relevant today? If so, why?
- c) When the boy says “Black is for the night that cloaks us from enemy eyes” would that statement still be true today according to current technology?
- d) Why do you suppose the author did not identify the country responsible for the bombing? Does the anonymity of the enemy help or hinder the story?
- e) Why is the protagonist nameless? Why do you suppose the author chose not to name him?
- f) Discuss current wars and how many children are involved in war all over the world.
- g) What are refugees? Where does the term ‘refugee’ come from. What is the root meaning?
- h) What does the word ‘foster’ mean. What does the word ‘sponsor’ mean. Both terms are used in the story.
- i) Examine the paragraph where the boy describes himself as a foster child. How does he feel about being sponsored? What is this story ultimately about?



## Pre-Performance Activities

### Junior, Intermediate and Secondary Grades

1. Act out the scene where the boy goes to the hospital because of Maha's accident. Don't use the book as a script, just stay true to the story. 
2. Find and listen to some traditional Pakistani and Afghan music. Describe what it sounds like to you and what instruments you think are being used. 
3. On slips of paper write the major events of the story: bomb dream, learning carpets, school, accident, hospital, etc. Pick one out and try to—without saying a word, or even using gestures—have your partner guess which scene it is by "reading" your facial expressions. 
4. Write a "found poem" based on the text in the book. Choose a particularly vivid scene and pair down the words to their most basic elements. Then experiment with line breaks for effect. Be sure to write Rukhsana Khan as the author, and the full title but list yourself as the person who "found" the poem within the text. 



Cut out the shape of a pallet (don't forget that little hole in the corner) and choose a pallet of colors you would use to tell this story. This is particularly effective if you at first don't let them see the illustrations] What do the different colours mean to you? What is 'white' for you? What is 'black'? What are the colors of the rainbow. Discuss the mixing of colours – red + yellow = orange

## Student Question Sheet for Junior Grades



1. What two words on the first page let you know that the bombs and the airplanes are not flying now?

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2. In what other countries could this story be true?

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3. Why does the boy say that washing his face is "a useless habit"?

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4. What does he mean when he says "I will pull my sash a little tighter."?

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5. How did the boy feel about his father?

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6. In what ways does the boy show he cares for his sister?

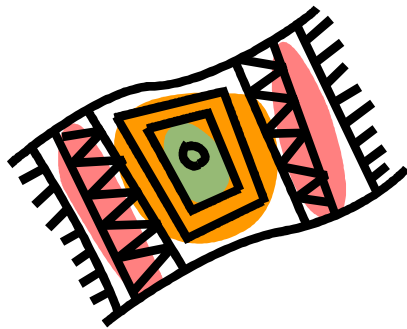
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7. What is the best description in the story? Why did you choose that particular sentence?

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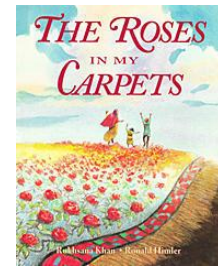
8. Describe in your own words where the boy lives with his mother and sister.

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## Student Exercise Sheet for Intermediate and Secondary Grades



Answer the following:

1. One of the basic rules of writing is ‘show don’t tell’. i.e. Show the emotions of the characters, show their situation, don’t tell what they’re feeling. The word ‘poor’ doesn’t occur at all in the text of the story. What are three ways the author has used to show that the family is poor?
2. A motif is a recurring element that has symbolic significance to the story. One of the motifs in the story is bread. It appears three times in the story. What are some other motifs of the story?
3. What does bread symbolize in the story? How does the author use the bread motif to illustrate the relationship between the main character and his sister and the condition of the family’s poverty?
4. At the end of the day the family is having bread and water for supper. What do you think the author was suggesting with the mention of bread and water?
5. How would this story be different if told through his sister’s eyes?
6. The boy says his father would never have taken money from a sponsor. The boy does, would you in these circumstances?
7. Imagine you had to work to support your family, what job would you be interested in learning about? Why?











## Post Performance Discussion Topics

### Junior, Intermediate and Secondary Grades:





1. What was the most interesting thing you learned from the presentation?
2. Do any of the students sponsor a child through an organization like World Vision?
3. Has anyone ever had a chance to meet their sponsored child? If so, what was the experience like?
4. Discuss what happens next in the boy's story when the book is over.

## Post Performance Activities

### Junior Grades

1. Brainstorm ways students can participate in the ongoing effort to help orphans in Afghanistan and other war-torn countries. Visit the author's website:  
<http://www.rukhsanakhan.com/orphanafghan.htm> 
2. Send any funds raised to the project or any charity that works with refugees.
3. Using a box, create a diorama of one of the scenes in the book. You can use any media that you wish. 
4. Write a story about a 'refuge' (safe place) you know. 
5. Research the United Nations and the way it ministers to refugees all over the world.
6. Write a story where you have to move from your home because of war. How would you feel? 
7. Weaving activity:
  - a) Talk about looms and knotting of rugs.
  - b) Discover Mathematical formulas to make a pattern. 
  - c) Provide carpet mesh and yarn for rug hooking
  - d) Or use paper strips or graph paper and colored pencils. 
  - d) Look on the back of a carpet and count the number of knots per inch.
  - e) Discuss ways of repeating a pattern.

## Intermediate/Secondary Grades

1. Brainstorm ways students can participate in the ongoing effort to help orphans in Afghanistan and other war-torn countries. Visit the author's website:  
<http://www.rukhsanakhan.com/orphanafghan.htm> 
2. Send all funds raised to the project or to another charity that works with refugees.
3. Divide the class in groups and each group research an aspect of the United Nations and the way it ministers to refugees all over the world. Check out the website: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home> 
4. Have the students cut out an article from a newspaper or magazine. The article should be accompanied by a picture of the person in the story. Have the students examine the facial expressions of the person, and compare it to the newspaper story. Have the students rewrite the story as if they were the person in the picture and it had happened to them. 
5. In groups create a comparison chart of your daily life compared to the boy's daily life.
6. Write in role: e.g. Write a letter from one character in the story to another. Write a letter from a reader of the story to one of the characters in the story. Write an imaginary diary entry or a newspaper report or prepare a documentary on Afghanistan. 
7. Make a character change chart showing how one character changes during the story and what caused the change.



## Student Activity Sheet for

### Junior – Intermediate Grades:

### Construct a Mud House!



During the presentation the process for making mud houses was outlined.

In groups, make your own model mud houses using clay or mud mixed with grass. Use square ice cube trays to mold the bricks.

Let them air dry and then stack them into walls using wet mud as mortar and twigs or popsicle sticks as reinforcements for door and window frames.

Plaster over with more mud, lay sticks across the top and build them into the little walls.

Lay plastic wrap on top (to represent the garbage bags). Then apply more mud on the roof to hold the plastic down.

Doors and windows are made with sticks laid across in lintel fashion. Use string to tie your sticks together. Now imagine making a house on a livable scale!



# Teacher Resource Material

## Websites:

<http://www.afghanistans.com/>

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home>

## Books:

### Junior picture books and novels:

*From Far Away* by Saoussan Askar and Robert Munsch

*Sami and the Time of Troubles* by Florency Parry Heide & Gilliland Judith Heide

*The Color of Home* by Mary Hoffman

*The Carpet Boy's Gift* by Pegi Deitz Shea

*Parvana's Journey* by Deborah Ellis

*Mud City* by Deborah Ellis

### Intermediate and secondary:

*The Kite Runner* by Khalid Hosseini

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khalid Hosseini

*Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson

# Teacher Section



## Curriculum Connections: (selected from Grades 3, 6, and 8)

### Language Arts

#### Junior/Intermediate

- demonstrate an understanding of the information and ideas in a variety of oral texts by summarizing important ideas and citing important details
- extend understanding of oral texts by connecting the ideas in them to their own knowledge, experience, and insights
- identify the presentation strategies used in oral texts and analyse their effect on the audience
- identify some non-verbal cues, including facial expression, gestures, and eye contact, and use them in oral communications, appropriately and with sensitivity towards cultural differences, to help convey their meaning
- read a wide variety of texts from diverse cultures, including literary texts
- develop interpretations about texts using stated and implied ideas to support their interpretations
- extend understanding of texts by connecting, comparing, and contrasting the ideas in them to their own knowledge, experience, and insights,
- identify the topic, purpose, and audience for a variety of writing forms
- gather information to support ideas for writing
- establish a distinctive voice in their writing appropriate to the subject and audience
- identify their point of view and other possible points of view

### Social Studies



#### Junior/Intermediate

- use base maps and a variety of information sources to sketch the relative position of places
- describe Canada's participation in international efforts to address current global issues (e.g. peacekeeping and reconstruction in Afghanistan; international foster child programs)
- analyse, synthesize, and evaluate historical information from different points of view

- communicate the results of inquiries for specific purposes and audiences, using media works, , oral presentations, written notes and descriptions, and drawings,
- summarize the factors that affect patterns of urbanization, industrialization, and transportation. (E.g. how geography affects life in Afghanistan)
- use a variety of geographic representations, resources, tools, and technologies to gather, process, and communicate geographic information about regional, national, and international economic systems; (e.g. compare Canada and Afghanistan)
- describe a variety of ways in which people use and manage renewable, non-renewable, and flow resources to meet their needs (e.g. daily coping with life in the refugee camp)

## The Arts

### Junior/Intermediate

#### Music

- communicate their thoughts and feelings about the music they hear, using language and a variety of art forms and media
- express their responses to music from a variety of cultures

#### Drama/Dance

- demonstrate understanding of ways of sustaining the appropriate voice or character (e.g. body language, voice, facial expression)
- write in role in various forms (e.g., monologues, speeches, radio or television broadcasts), showing understanding of the complexity of a dramatic situation

#### Visual Art

- describe how the repetition of elements of design creates rhythm, which unifies the composition
- describe how artists representing a variety of historical periods, styles, and cultures have used the elements and principles of design to create a specific effect